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ABSTRACT

A study of essays on a single topic (capital punishment) written by 22 American high school students and 30 second-year Japanese college students investigated: cultural differences in organizational patterns in argumentative essays; comparative use of rational and affective appeals; differences in content of rational and affective appeals; characteristic types of rhetorical devices used; and specific cultural features of the compositions. Analyses and writing excerpts are presented here. Results indicate that in organizational pattern, a difference was found in the organizational unit termed "reservation," which gives Japanese rhetoric an impression of circularity. American students used more rational appeals and Japanese students used more affective appeals. Typical American argumentative strategies were logical, and Japanese strategies were more emotional. Americans preferred emphatic devices (e.g., "should, I believe") while the Japanese preferred softening devices and hedges (e.g., "I think, maybe") and emotional words (e.g., "Sad, Sorrow"). Distinctive differences were also found in preferred cultural tokens; Americans often referred to "Counseling, Biblical teaching, taxpayer's standpoint") while the Japanese touched on the victim's and family's needs ("empathy"). The study's results suggest further areas for research. Contains 16 references. (MSE)

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A Crosscultural Analysis of Argumentative Strategies in Student Essays

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I. Introduction

Since Kaplan's pioneering work in 1966, a considerable number of studies in contrastive rhetoric have been conducted. Many of these studies differentiated 'organizational' features among expository writings in different languages or by writers with different first language backgrounds. For example, Hinds (1983, 1987) investigated the differences in organizational pattern between English and Japanese expository writing, while Ostler (1987) analyzed English compositions written by English- and Arabic- speaking writers with discoursal as well as sentential measures.

Little attention, however, has been paid to investigating 'extra-organizational' aspects of contrastive rhetoric. Only a few researchers, for instance, have examined what kinds of rhetorical appeals for persuasion are employed by writers with different language backgrounds; Connor and Lauer (1985, 1988) were the first researchers who probed this aspect in the students' argumentative essays. Thus, much previous contrastive rhetoric research has centered on differences in form (organizational pattern) rather than content (rhetorical persuasiveness) in written discourse in diverse languages. Such emphasis, or overemphasis on form, has often been one of the sources for criticism against contrastive rhetoric from process-oriented writing researchers and instructors (Leki, 1991).

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Considering such criticism, in addition to the organizational feature, the present study attempts to cover extra-organizational aspects of contrastive rhetoric: the rhetorical appeals, diction, and cultural aspects. Those aspects are analyzed with argumentative essays written by two groups of writers with distinctively different linguistic-cultural backgrounds, i.e., American and Japanese writers.

Rhetorical appeals, one of our analytical points, are discussed in Connor & Lauer (1988). In this study, Connor & Lauer argue that since argumentation replaced persuasion in Western rhetorical tradition, "the teaching of argumentation [has] focused almost exclusively on logic," i.e., on rational appeals. However, an effective

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argumentative discourse should be one which integrates rational as well as affective appeals. Also Okabe (1993) maintains that Western rhetoric puts more emphasis on persuading the audience with logic than Japanese rhetoric, which, by contrast, gives more weight on evoking empathy in the audience. In this study, therefore, both rational and affective appeals are taken into consideration.

If there are indeed differences in English and Japanese rhetoric as Okabe claims, then, the diction or expressions used as argumentative strategies by American and Japanese writers might also show differences. Accordingly, there should be patterns of diction which characterize American and Japanese argumentative essays.

Furthermore, many crosscultural communication studies have pointed out that different cultures operate in different value systems (Condon & Yousef, 1975). If, for example, there is a culture which values intellect, there is also a culture which underscores intuition (Barnlund, 1975). When the writers come from different cultures, their strategies to persuade the audience are expected to reflect the different values nurtured in their own respective cultures. This study, therefore, also examines the cultural features of argumentative strategies chosen by American and Japanese writers.

Specifically, the present study asks the following five research questions:

1) Are there differences in organizational pattern between argumentative essays written by American and Japanese writers?

2) Do American student writers employ more rational than affective appeals, while Japanese student writers use more affective than rational appeals?

3) Are there any differences in content of the rational and affective appeals between the essays written by American and Japanese writers?

4) What types of diction characterize argumentative essays by American and Japanese writers respectively?

5) What specific cultural features can be observed in argumentative essays by American and Japanese writers?

II. Procedure

A. Subjects

There are two sets of subjects for this project. One group is twenty-two New York high school seniors, who represent American samples. The other is thirty second-year Japanese college students. We realize that as a comparison it would have been better if we could have obtained the writings of college students in both cases. However, we were unable to procure that data in time for this paper.

B. Task

The students in the both groups were asked to write an argumentative essay during a regular composition class. The title was: "What do you think of capital punishment? Are you for or against it?"

C. Analysis

The samples were analyzed both linguistically and culturally, using the category of : (1) Organizational pattern, (2) Rhetorical appeal, (3) Diction, (4) Cultural aspects. The first three deal with linguistic domains and the last one reflects cultural considerations.

1. Organizational Pattern

First , all the sentences in each sample were interpreted as to the function in the discourse and blocks of sentences were put into the following organizational units:

(1) **Thesis Statement** (TS), (2) **Background Information** (BI), (3) **Reservation** (RE), (4) **Hesitation** (H), (5) **Rational Appeals** (R), (6) **Affective Appeals**, and (7) **Conclusion** (C).

Among these, the terms "Thesis Statement" and "Conclusion" are normative terms in composition. **Thesis Statement** in the present study is applied to the sentence which clarifies writer's stance as to capital punishment, namely "For" or "Against " capital punishment.

Conclusion is the sentence or sentences that summarize writer's opinion as in:"In New York there are a tremendous amount of murders. And the only way to cut down on them is to enforce the penalty." (A2) Conclusion is usually placed at the end.

The definitions of the rest of the organizational units are as follow:

In **Background Information**, writers gives introductory comments concerning capital punishment, without taking any stance as to For/Against capital punishment, as in the following example: "Capital punishment is one of the most controversial issues of society today. The reason for this

debate is that on one side, people feel that no one has the right to kill another person, and that death is not a form of punishment. On the other side, people feel that if someone kills a person, then he/she should die also."(A6)

Reservation refers to the sentences in which the writer recognizes that capital punishment is a controversial issue and shows his/her understanding to the counter opinion to his/hers. The following one is an example: "To be honest, I think capital punishment isn't so good thing. Because the man who make a mistake is a person whatever he did, and to kill a person is the most precious thing. **(RE)** However, ..." (J5)

Hesitation, on the other hand, applies to the statement which the writer withholds his/her judgement toward the issue. That is to say, he/she takes neither "For" nor "Against" position. For example, "I think I can't say that a capital punishment is for or against [I am for or against capital punishment]".(J20)

Reservation and **Hesitation** may sound the same in that both apply to the statements from which we cannot infer the writer's judgement. The difference between **Reservation** and **Hesitation** is this: in the writings in which **Reservation** appears, the writer mentions his/her opinion somewhere along the discourse, while in the writing in which **Hesitation** appears, the author never clearly states his/her opinion in any portion of the writing.

The rest of the sentences in the discourse are the writer's opinion that supports the writer's Thesis Statement. We name these sentences that reflect the writer's opinion on capital punishment "Appeals". And we divided these appeals into "Rational Appeals" and "Affective Appeals." This division is based on the work of Connor and Lauer(1985). Although Connor and Lauer divided appeals into three; namely Rational appeals, Credibility appeals, and Affective appeals, we chose a dichotomous division.

Rational Appeals are those that appeal to logic, while **Affective Appeals** aim at emotional effect. An example of a representative rational appeal is as follows: "The second reason why we should have the death penalty to save taxpayer's money. By sending killers to jail, we are paying for their food and imprisonment. I really don't feel that murderers deserve to have own money to keep them cleaned and fed."(A17)

A counter example, an example of an affective appeal is the one like this: "Once a child or person's life has been taken the family and loved ones are murdered as well. In this sense, the bond between the family and its members die along with this crime."(A13)

After labeling blocks of sentences with these category markers, we investigated the discourse

types more in detail. This reflects the findings of our previous studies. In Oi (1986) and Oi and Kamimura (1995), we have pointed out that American and Japanese writers differ in organizing English argumentative essay in two respects. First, American writers tend to organize ideas in the "General-Specific" pattern, where they present the main idea at the outset of the essay as the thesis statement, develop it with supporting details, and summarize the main points at the end as a conclusion. In contrast, Japanese writers tend to prefer either the "Specific-General" pattern, where they wail until they come to the end to state the main idea as a thesis statement, or the "Omission" pattern, where they do not present a thesis statement, hesitating to take either the pro or the con position. Secondly, American writers organize ideas in a linear way, while Japanese writers organize in a circular way. This suggests that American writers state the position clearly at the outset, either agreeing or disagreeing with a given topic, maintaining that position until the end. However, Japanese writers often try to incorporate both sides of an argument, with their position fluctuating throughout the essay.

To examine whether these two different organizational patterns are also observable in the present study, we posited the following two hypothesis concerning organizational patterns:

1) The American students use more Thesis statements and Conclusion, whereas the Japanese students use more Hesitations.

2) The Japanese students use more Reservation than American students.

2. Rhetorical appeals

As we mentioned earlier, we divided rhetorical appeals into Rational Appeals and Affective Appeals.

a. **Frequency count**

The next step was to count the two kinds of appeals in the both groups to see which kind of appeal each group uses more frequently.

b. Content analysis

Further, all appeals including , both rational and affective, were put into the following categories to examine the content of each of two kinds of appeal in detail:

CRITERIA OF CONTENT ANALYSIS

<FOR>

Rational (a) The criminal should pay his own life for his crime.

(b) Captal punishment can deter potential criminals from committing a murder.

(c) Murder is an ultimate crime.

(d) It is costly to keep a criminal in a prison for a long time.

(e) The safety of the society needs to be maintained.

(f) Others

Affective (g) The suffering of the victim's family and friends needs to be considered.

(i) Others

<AGAINST>

Rational (1) A nation is not allowed to commit a murder.

(2) Life is precious (Nobody can deprive another of the right to live.)

(3) There can be a false charge.

(4) Long imprisonment is a better means of atonement.

(5) Others

Affective (6) Capital punishment is inhuman.

(7) The extreme anxiety a criminal and his/her family bear needs to be considered.

(8) The criminals should bear severer suffering than capital punishment.

(9) Others

Examples for the above criteia are shown in Appemdix 1.

3. Diction

The next linguistic analysis to pick up those dictions representative for American writing and those for Japanese writing. Specifically, we paid attention to those phrases.

The specific dictions we chose are as follows:

American types:

Predicates	**should/must, I am sure, I believe,**
Adverbs	**totally/absolutely, strongly, no doubt, no means**
Adjectives	**only, ultimate/supreme, the + superlatives**
Nouns	**no one/nobody, firm believer, no way**

Japanese types:

Predicates	**I think, I think (post-positioned), I wonder, I can't say, I'm not against (I don't agree(etc), I can't allow (I can't forgive, etc), may, might**
Adverbs	**perhaps, maybe**
Adjective	**sad**
Noun	**sorrow**

Looking at this list, we can say those dictions for American types are those of "emphatic devices", and those for Japanese types are "softening devices". We focused on these dictions because it is often said that the characteristics of American writing is often described as hyperbolic, and those of Japanese is downtoning. For example, Condon and Yousef (1975) give a following charming contrast in entertaining guests in either cultures:

"When entertaining a foreign guest, the US hostess might say: ' Eat all you can. I've spent all day fixing this and there are tons more in the kitchen.' Functionally, the Japanese equivalent is this: 'nani mo gozaimasenga....', a polite apology which literally meas, ' There is nothing to eat.' "

We will investigate whether this contrast of "hyperbolic" vs. "downtoning" will hold true in this study.

4. Cultural aspect

The last analysis was to check into cultural influences on writing. For those reflecting American culture, we focused on the following three tokens as representing American culture.: (1) Counseling, (2) Biblical teaching, and (3) Taxpayer's standpoint. For the Japanese counterparts, the following three tokens were chosen: (1) Family , (2) Empathy, and (3) Concrete incidents. Examples for each of the cultural tokens are as follows:

Reflecting American culture:

(1) The murderer should go to **couseling.** (A3)

(2) **God** does not accept murdering innocent people. (A5)

(3) Why should we the **tax payers** pay for these murderers to live in jail. (A12)

Reflecting Japanese culture:

(1) ...the sorrow of **suffer's family** increase.(J11)

(2) **If one of your family is killed**, can you permit the one who killed one of your family?

(3) For example **the gas accident in the subway in Tokyo, browing up by the terroism in the U.S. A.** and so on. (J15)

More examples of the above cultural tokens are shown in Appendix 2.

III. Results and Discussion

1. Organizational pattern

Table 1 shows the number of occurrences of the seven different organizational units found in the American and Japanese writing samples.

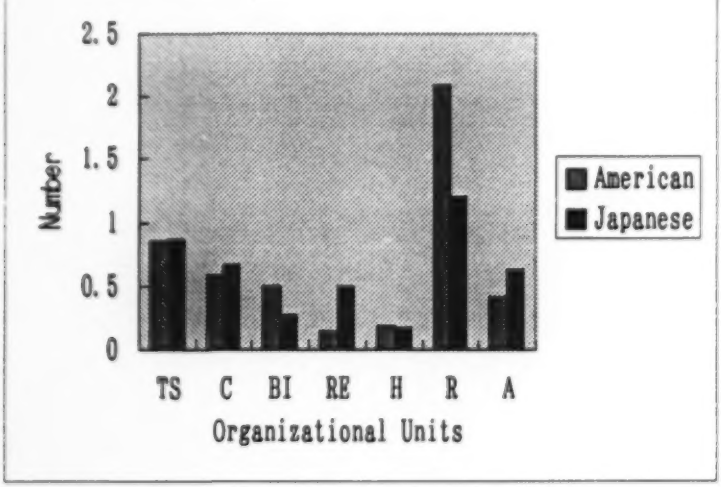
Table 1: The Number of Occurrences of Seven Different Organizational Units

Organizational Unit / Groups	TS	C	BI	RE	H	R	A	Total
American	19	13	11	3	4	46	9	105
Japanese	26	20	8	15	5	36	19	129

A chi-square test was administered to see if there are any differences in the American and Japanese groups in terms of organizational pattern. The test confirmed statistically significant differences between the two groups (χ^2=13.63, p<.05).

Since the total numbers of the samples in the two groups were different, we calculated the average for organizational units for the two groups of subjects, as is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The Average Number of Organizational Units for the Two Groups



As we have mentioned in the Procedure section, we posited the two hypotheses for the analysis of organizational pattern in the study. Namely, they were:

1) The American students use more Thesis Statements and Conclusions, whereas the Japanese students use more Hesitations; and

2) The Japanese students use more Reservations than the American students.

As Figure 1 shows, it was found that there was no significant difference between the two groups in Thesis Statement, Conclusion, and Hesitation, but that there was a significant difference in Reservation.

A large number of the American and Japanese students incorporated a Thesis Statement (86.36% for the American students and 86.67% for the Japanese students) and a Conclusion (59.10% for the American students and 66.67% for the Japanese students) in their writings. In our analysis, both a Thesis Statement and a Conclusion are the units which can occur only once per writing, and a Conclusion is defined as the unit which can be counted as such only when preceded by a Thesis Statement. Thus, the result suggests that more than half the Japanese and American students in this study wrote in the "General-Specific" pattern with a Thesis Statement and a Conclusion. In addition, we can spot few occurrences of Hesitation--four instances in the American group and five instances in the Japanese group. This means that both the American and Japanese students in general stated their opinions as to capital punishment explicitly in a Thesis Statement and Conclusion, without hesitation.

However, far more instances of Reservations were observed in the Japanese group (15 occurrences) than in the American group (3 occurrences). The finding suggests that some Japanese students wrote in a circular way in which they changed their positions several times in their writings.

The following sample written by a Japanese student well demonstrates a circular pattern in which the writer changes her positions several times throughout the entire essay. All the grammatical and lexical errors are left intact.

TS
[I agree with the capital punishment, because I think it is very necessary.]
RE
[I often watch many news on TV, a newspaper, and so on.

And many people discuss about the capital punishment.

When I listen to the opinion people is against the capital punishment, I sometimes think

deeply which is the best opinion?

This problem is very difficult.

In this world many people become prisoner at different crime, killing people, make an traffic accident, etc.

And all people aren't 凶悪 (atrocious), kindless, and don't have cold hearts.]

R

[But some of them like to kill people. Though he suffered from his illness in his heart, he killed many people.

We must give him a punishment or he leave the police, he will kill people again. If he is alive, he will kill people.]

RE

[Of course, many of them change in the prison.]

R

[But I think some them don't change. They will not change in his life. "If he doesn't change, we keep him in the prison forever," people say.

But in my country even if he was said to have to keep in the prison without deciding the date he can go out, he can go out if he work seriously, even a bad prisoner!

I'm afraid of him to do the same thing again.]

RE

[I think it's wrong to do the capital punishment for everybody in the prison.]

R

[But I'm for doing it for the man who don't change.]

RE

[Of course, there are many problems. "May the country kill people?" "Can't the prisoner have the right?", etc.]

R

[But they don't obey the rule, the law. I think they can't talk about his right, because they don't do the things they have to do.

In New York, the capital punishment will be done again. I think it's natural.

C

[In the

age, people thought it isn't necessary, but in this world there are many crimes without the

capital punishment.]

[TS]→[RE]→[R]→[RE]→[R]→[RE]→[R]→[RE]→[R]→[C]

In this sample, she first agrees with capital punishment. However, she begins to ask herself, "Which is the best opinion?" and says, "This problem is very difficult." After that, she manages to support her initial claim that she agrees with capital punishment, but at several places, she takes an opposite position with the frequent use of a conjunction "but." For instance, she says, "We must give him [a convict] a punishment or ... he will kill people again. If he is alive, he will kill people again." But in the next sentence, she reserves this claim and states, "Of course many of them change." Then, again, she changes her position in the next sentence, which starts with "but" and goes like this: "But I think some them don't change. They will not change in his life." The whole essay is written in a circular pattern with four instances of Reservation.

2. Rhetorical appeals

a. Frequency count

The next analysis was the frequency count of the two kinds of appeals, namely, the Rational and Affective Appeals.

Here, we should mention the fact that the two groups had no definite preference in choosing the position, as is shown in Table 2. A chi-square test indicated that no significant difference was found in the distribution of positions taken between the two groups ($\chi^2=1.67$, $p<.05$). Therefore, the following analysis was conducted to see how and what appeals the American and Japanese writers employed to support the position, regardless of the writer's position as to capital punishment.

Table 2: Distribution of Positions Taken by Two Groups

Positions / Groups	For	Against	Neither
American	11 (50.00%)	7 (31.82%)	4 (18.18%)
Japanese	14 (46.67%)	12 (40.00%)	4 (13.33%)

Table 3 presents how many times the Rational and Affective Appeals appeared in the two groups of argumentative writings.

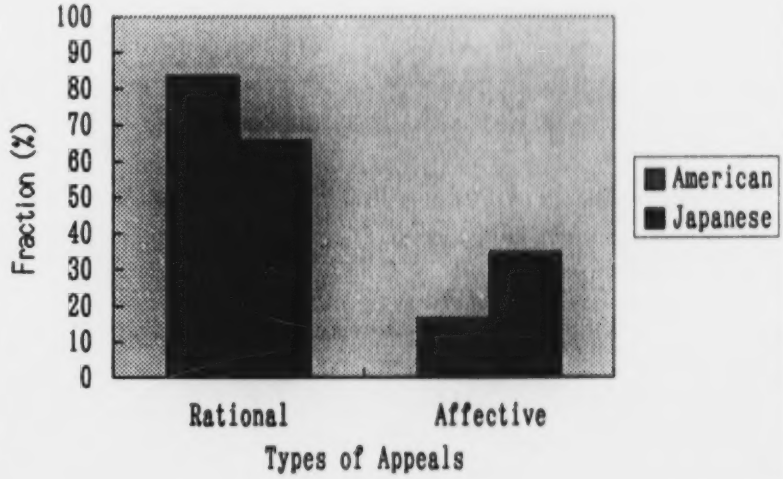
Table 3: The Number of Rational and Affective Appeals in the Two Groups

Appeals / Groups	Rational	Affective	Total
American	46 (83.63%)	9 (16.36%)	55
Japanese	36 (65.45%)	19 (34.55%)	55

A chi-square test confirmed that there were statistically significant differences between American and Japanese groups for the number of Rational and Affective Appeals ($\chi^2=4.79, p<.05$).

Figure 2 shows the fraction of each appeal for the two groups. We can see that the American students used far more Rational Appeals (83.63%) than the Japanese counterparts (65.45%), who employed, in conrast, far more Affective Appeals (34.55%) than the American subjects (16.36%). In persuading the audience, the Japanese tend to take emotional strategies through which the writer tries to evoke empathy in the reader's

Figure 2: The Fractions of Rational and Affective Appeals for the Two Groups



mind. On the other hand, the American approach seems to assume an assertive stance by which the writer attempts to lead the reader to understand his claim by using logical reasoning. This finding supports Okabe's notion on the dichotomous difference between Western and Japanese rhetorics, which we referred to in our Introduction.

b. Content of appeals

Both the Rational and Affective Appeals were further classified into different content categories.

Table 4 lists the numbers of the two appeals which fell into the different categories.

Table 4: The Number of Appeals in Different Content Categories

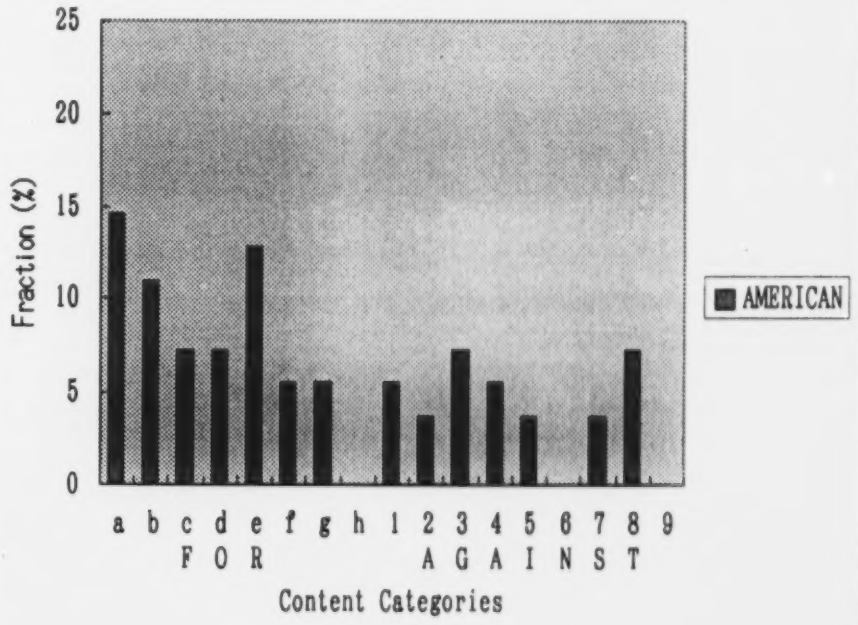
Groups / Appeals		American	Japanese
For			
Rational	a	8 (14.55%)	11 (20 %)
	b	6 (10.91%)	1 (1.82%)
	c	4 (7.27%)	3 (5.45%)
	d	4 (7.27%)	0 (0 %)
	e	7 (12.73%)	7 (12.73%)
	f	3 (5.45%)	1 (1.82%)
Affective	g	3 (5.45%)	12 (21.82%)
	h	0 (0 %)	1 (1.82%)
Against			
Rational	1	3 (5.45%)	1 (1.82%)
	2	2 (3.64%)	3 (5.45%)
	3	4 (7.27%)	3 (5.45%)
	4	3 (5.45%)	4 (7.27%)
	5	2 (3.64%)	2 (3.64%)
Affective	6	0 (0 %)	1 (1.82%)
	7	2 (3.64%)	1 (1.82%)
	8	4 (7.27%)	2 (3.64%)
	9	0 (0 %)	2 (3.64%)
Total		55	55

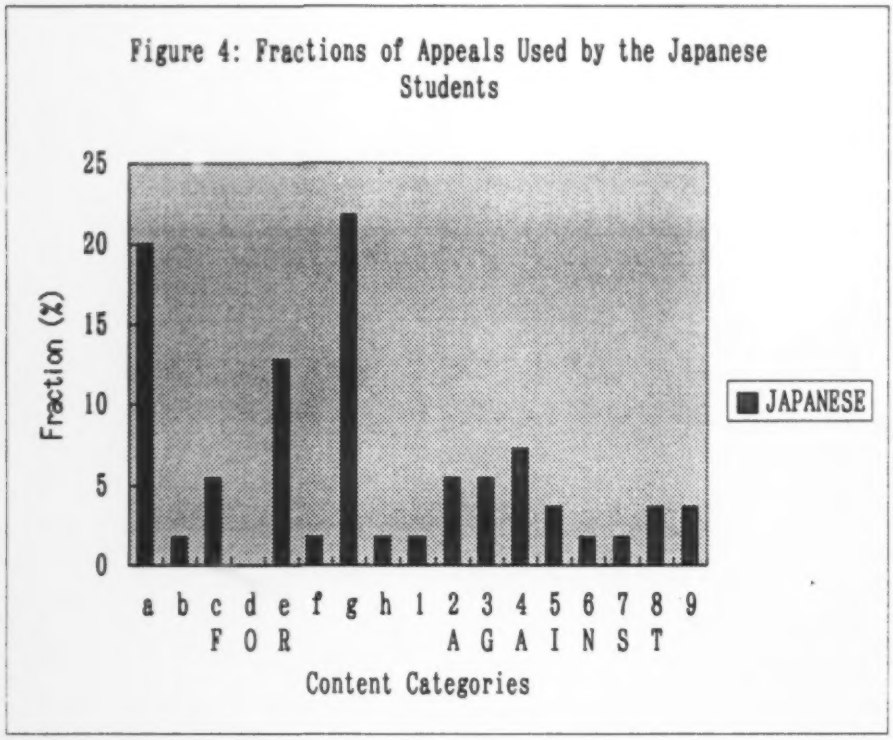
When examined by a chi-square test, it was found that there are significant differences between the two groups in terms of the content of the Rational and Affective

Appeals (χ^2=21.07, p<.05).

Again, we converted the data in Table 4 into the fraction in percentage, as is shown in Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3: Fractions of Appeals Used by the American Students





As we can see in Figures 3 and 4, the category which the American subjects used most frequently was (a) (The criminal should pay his own life for his crime.), and the category which the Japanese subjects relied on most was (g) (The suffering of the victim's family and friends need to be considered.). This suggests that the typical argumentative strategy used by the American students was quite logically-oriented: to justify capital punishment by the logic in the Old Testament, "a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth", namely, if one deprives another of a precious life, one should pay one's own life. In contrast, the typical strategy employed by the Japanese writers was more emotionally-oriented: to appeal to the readers' emotions, asking for the need to take the position of the victim's family and friends and to consider their sufferings.

3. Diction

The next analysis concerned the types of diction preferred by the two groups of writers. We counted the number of subjects who used each item of diction of the American and Japanese types at least once somewhere in their writings. Table 5 presents the number of subjects who used each item of the American types of dicion, whereas Table 6 shows the number of subjects who used the Japanese types of diction.

Table 5: The Results of the Analysis of Diction of the American Types

Groups / Types		American	Japanese
Predicates	should/must	21 (95.45%)	16 (53.33%)
	I am sure	1 (4.54%)	0 (0 %)
	I believe	2 (9.09%)	0 (0 %)
Adverbs	totally/absolutely/ strongly/entirely	6 (27.27%)	3 (10.00%)
	no doubt	1 (4.45%)	0 (0 %)
	by no means	1 (4.45%)	0 (0 %)
Adjectives	only	6 (27.27%)	2 (6.67%)
	ultimate/supreme	2 (9.09%)	0 (0 %)
	the + superative	8 (36.36%)	5 (16.67%)
Nouns	no one/nobody	4 (18.18%)	4 (13.33%)
	firm believer	1 (4.54%)	0 (0 %)
	no way	1 (4.54%)	0 (0 %)

Table 6: The Results of the Analysis of Diction of the Japanese Types

Groups / Types		American	Japanese
Predicates	I think (pre-positioned)	9 (40.91%)	24 (80 %)
	I think (post-positioned)	0 (0 %)	6 (20 %)
	I wonder	0 (0 %)	2 (6.67%)
	I can't say	0 (0 %)	3 (10 %)
	I'm not against/ I don't agree	0 (0 %)	3 (10 %)
	I can't allow/ I can't forgive	0 (0 %)	5 (16.67%)
	may, might	7 (31.82%)	7 (23.33%)
Adverbs	perhaps, maybe	1 (4.54%)	8 (26.67%)
Adjective	sad	0 (0 %)	3 (10 %)
Noun	sorrow	0 (0 %)	3 (10 %)

As we can see in Tables 5 and 6, each group had a particular preference in the choice of diction. The types of diction preferred by the American subjects function as an "emphatic device," while those preferred by the Japanese counterparts act as a "softening device." These devices we observed in written discourse resemble those devices which pragmatics researchers noticed in spoken discourse and called "upgraders" and "downgraders" respectively (Blum-Kulka, House & Kaspter, 1989).

Specifically, the American students tended to emphasize the importance of their claim with such diction as "**should**" (53.3%)," "**totally, absolutely, strongly, entirely**" (27.3%), "**only**" (27.3%), "**the + superlative**" (36.4%), and "**no one, nobody**" (18.2%). None of the Japanese students used such phrases as "**I am sure**," "**I believe**," "**no doubt**," "**by no means**," "**ultimate, supreme**," "**firm believer**," and "**no way**."

On the other hand, the Japanese students preferred to mitigate their tone, using those expressions like "**I think**"and "**maybe, perhaps**" (26.67%). The use of "**I think**" is worth noting: as many as 80% of the Japanese students used this expression before stating their opinions (as in "**I think** capital punishment isn't so good thing" (J17)), and those post-positioned were only found in the Japanese samples (20%) (as in "To save a big crime, there must be the capital punishment, **I think**" (J10)). The prevalent use of this post-positioned "**I think**" reflects the Japanese student's hesitation in assuming a decisive attitude. Also, this is a case of grammatical transfer from Japanese, in which it is obligatory to place this phrase, "**I think**" (omou) at the end of the sentence. In addition, though the numbers of instances were not large, emotional phrases characterize some of the Japanese samples: "**I can't allow**"(16.67%), "**sad**"(10%), and "**sorrow**" (10%). Thus, we can see, in the choice of diction as well, the American students' orientation towards the Rational Appeals and the Japanese students' orientation towards the Affective Appeals.

4. Cultural aspects

The fourth analysis was to probe the cultural aspects in the two groups' writings. Table 7 shows how many times the American and Japanese cultural tokens appeared in the samples.

Table 7: The Results of the Analysis for Cultural Aspects

Groups / Cultural tokens	American	Japanese
American		
Counseling	2	0
Biblical teaching	5	0
Taxpayer's standpoint	4	0
Japanese		
Family and friends	4	13
Empathy	0	7
Concrete incidents	7	1

Some of the American student writers backed up their opinions by referring to "counseling," "Biblical teaching," and "the taxpayer's standpoint." Thus, one American student writes, "the murderer should go to **counseling**" (A3), another writes, "**God** does not accept murdering innocent people" (A5), and still another writes, "Why should we the **tax payers** pay for these murderers to live in jail?" (A12). None of the Japanese students referred to these cultural points. On the other hand, a great number of the Japanese students indicated the need to consider the victim's "**family and friends**," saying "if I were **parents** of a person who was killed by that man, I can't stand whatever he have reason " (J5). And as we can see in this sentence, more than half of the references to the family (53.84%) were written in the subjunctive mood ("**if I were parents of a person who was killed by that man...**" or "**If one of your family is killed, can you permit the one who killed one of your family?**"). This mirrors a Japanese cultural value of "empathy," the common definition of which is "to put yourself in someone else's shoes." The Japanese students also tended to cite concrete incidents as examples to support their opinions. This might suggest the Japanese cultural tendency to avoid the rational and to prefer the tangible.

5. Sample writings

In this section, we would like to explain the results we have discussed so far more in detail with concrete examples, showing sample writings which represent the American and Japanese groups respectively.

5.1 Sample 2: The American group

Sample 2 is written by Subject A5, who represents the American group.

TS

[Murdering is the ultimate crime in society today. The only way to protect society is by stopping murders and the way to stop them is to have capital punishment.]

R(a)*

[Life is the greatest gift of all. In the Bible, one of the commandment is "Though shall not kill." When a person murders, he is going against God and taking away God's gift. Nobody has that right to kill someone so in society should execute the murderer for the sin he committed.

R(e)

[In the United States many states do not have capital punishment. The consequence for murderer is life in prison. Most of the time the person guilty of murder does not spend the rest of his life in prison. These people get out for good behavior and for speaking out against murder. In some states, due to extensive overcrowding, these people guilty of murder are released before the fifth feat of their sentence. They are put back on the street they are again tempted to murder.]

R(a)

[If any other crime is committed by a person or society they can recover. If murder is done there is no way to recover. God does not accept murdering innocent people so neither should his followers. Therefore, murderers should pay the ultimate price for what they did.

C

[Capital punishment is the only way for society to set the example that murder will not be tolerated.]

Note: "R(a)" means a Rational Appeal whose content category is (a)

[TS]→[R(a)]→[R(e)]→[R(a)]→[C]

This sample is organized in the "General-specific" pattern in which a Thesis statement is placed at the outset and a Conclusion is placed at the end. In the Thesis Statement, this American student clearly supports capital punishment, saying, "The way to stop them [murders] is to have capital punishment." And he restates his idea in the Conclusion, in which he says that "Capital punishment is the only way for society to set the example that murder will not be tolerated."

The claim stated in the Thesis Statement is supported by three Rational Appeals. No Affective Appeal is used in this sample. The first Rational Appeal is presented in the framework of the Old Testament, referring to the Ten Commandment and the logic of "a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." Thus, this Rational Appeal clearly reflects one of the American cultural values, that is, Biblical teaching.

Moreover, the student emphasizes his argument with several items of American types of diction, such as "ultimate," "only," "the greatest," "nobody," "should," again, "ultimate," and "only."

5.2 Sample 3: The Japanese group

The next sample, Sample 3, is written by Subject J13 and represents the Japanese group of writers.

TS
[Clearly I'm not against capital punishment: namely I was for it.]

RE
[Many people say everyone even if he is murderer has human right and we must respect him maximumly of course even if he is murderer.]

A(g)
[But I don't agree with this. If one of your family is killed, can you permit the one who killed one of your family? As for me, I never permit him, even if I am given how many money. The one who got great sorrow will never twice forget the sorrow. Then, what

on earth how we can deal with the sorrow that didn't know where it goes. We cannot want to be sorrow all our life.] [So the one who killed anyone should be told "capital punishment."]

C

[TS]→[RE]→[A]→[C]

Sample 3 is also organized in the "General-Specific" pattern with a Thesis Statement and a Conclusion. However, in this sample, just after the Thesis Statement, a Reservation appears, and then, the initial claim is again supported by an Affective Appeal. In the Thesis Statement, this student agrees with capital punishment, and immediately after that, reserves his position, saying, "Many people say everyone even if he is murderer has human right and we must respect him maximumly of course even if he is murderer." But again, he says, "But I don't agree with this," and begins to argue for capital punishment.

The appeal which the student uses to support his position is an Affective one. This Affective Appeal is so strong as to involve the reader emotionally.

> If one of your family is killed, can you permit the one who killed one of your family? As for me, I never permit him, even if I am given how many money. The one who got great sorrow will never twice forget the sorrow. Then, what on earth how we can deal with the sorrow that didn't know where it goes. We cannot want to be sorrow all our life.

He phrases his Affective Appeal in the subjunctive mood, "If one of your family is killed..., " thus inducing the reader to empathize with the suffering of the victim's family. Along with the subjunctive mood, he uses the second-person point of view, "you," to involve the reader into his personalized approach (Sorenson, 1992).

The student makes use of several softening devices with the Japanese types of diction, saying, "I'm not against" and "I don't agree" instead of using more direct expressions like "I'm for" and "I disagree." He also employs several emotional phrases and words, such as "I never permit him" and "sorrow" to create the emotional tone.

IV. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to uncover the differences in argumentative essay writing between distinctively different two groups: Japanese students and American students. The focus was placed on 1)organizational pattern, 2)rhetorical appeals, 3) diction, and 4) cultural aspect.

In the organizational pattern, the difference was found in the organizational unit called Reservation. The frequent use of Reservation by the Japanese writers characterizes the Japanese writing which gives the impression of circularity as Kaplan terms.

In terms of rhetorical appeals, we found that American students used more Rational Appeals than Japanese students, while Japanese students use more Affective Appeals than American students.

When we looked at the content of appeals more closely, we found that the typical argumentative strategy used by the American students was logically-oriented ones, e.g., to justify capital punishment by the logic "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth". In contrast, the typical strategy employed by the Japanese writers was more emotionally-oriented, appealing to the readers' emotions, aiming the effect of empathy, e.g., to take the position of the victim's family and friends and to consider their sufferings.

In the analysis of diction, we found a particular preference in the choice of diction in either group. The types of diction preferred by the American students were those of "emphatic device", such as "should", "the + superlatives", and "I believe", etc. On the other hand, the Japanese students preferred to use "softening devices" or hedges, such as "I think", "maybe". Also, it was found that the Japanese students often used emotional phrases such as "sad" and "sorrow."

Our last focus was on cultural aspect. We found distinctive differences in preferred cultural tokens by the both groups. American students often referred to "counseling", "Biblical teaching" and "taxpayer's standpoint." However, there was no references to these tokens by the Japanese counterparts. In contrast, Japanese students often touched upon the need to consider the victim's family and friends, and their approach was the one that aims at "empathy". In addition, it was also found that Japanese students liked to use concrete incidents to support their opinion.

The present study was carried out with the limited scope, the analysis of an argumentative essay on capital punishment. For the future research, the following research questions can be taken into consideration:

(1) What kinds of appeals do Japanese students use when writing on a different topic?

(2) Does the use of rational and affective appeals differ depending on students' levels of English proficiency?

(3) Do Japanese students change their argumentative strategies depending on different groups of audience, such as Japanese-speaking audience versus English-speaking audience?

(4) How do English-speaking readers judge the affectively-oriented argumentative writings of Japanese students?

(5) How do Japanese students transfer the argumentative strategies in their Japanese essays into their English essay?

Future research in a broader scale including above research questions will yield more comprehensive observations as to the rhetorical differences in argumentative essays written by Japanese and American students.

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APPENDIX 1

Examples for the CRITERIA OF CONTENT ANALYSIS

<FOR>

Rational

(a) The criminal should pay his own life for his crime.

"To me this is the only way to put a stop to some of the murders. For example, if someone killed somebody close to pay is their life, not life in prison and parol in a couple of years."(A4)

(b) CP can deter potential criminals from committing a murder.

"To me the only way to get a killer to think twice about killing someone is for him to have the death penalty to think about."(A4)

(c) Murder is an ultimate crime.

"Murder is the worst crime that can be commit." (A2)

(d) It is costly to keep a criminal in a prison for a long time.

" It costs a lot of money to keep people like them in jail. So why pay so much when they killed someone. They should be executed." (A2)

(e) The safety of the society needs to be maintained.

"In some states, due to extensive overcrowding, these people guilty of murder are released before the fifth year of their sentence. They are put back on the street they are again tempted to murder." (A5)

Affective

(g) The suffering of the victim's family and friends needs to be considered.

<AGAINST>

Rational

(1) A nation is not allowed to commit a murder.

"We were never taught to kill, so why should the government kill?"(A3)

(2) Life is precious (Nobody can deprive another of the right to live.)

"Life is a precious thing....They don't need to be taken away from this world even if they have taken someone else's life."(A14)

(3) There can be a false charge.

"The main reason I oppose the death penalty is because of people who are falsely accused."(A1)

(4) Long imprisonment is a better means of atonement.

"I believe that these people should be punished for what they have done with a very long sentence in prison and hard labor during their sentence." (A1)

Affective

(6) CP is inhuman.

"Even if a man is murderer in the first degree, he would not be a demon. He is a people."(J1)

(7) The extreme anxiety a criminal and his/her family bear needs to be considered.

"Of course both the victim's and the guilty's families are very hurt and upset. You need comforting not pain by taking yet another precious life and make it worse." (A14)

(8) The criminals should bear severer suffering than capital punishment.

" If someone kills, they should be put in jail for life without any parole. By giving them the death penalty, we are letting them off easy. This killer should have to suffer for what he or she has done. Life in prison is the best punishment we could possibly enforce."(A11)

APPENDIX 2

Examples for each cultural token

Reflecting American culture:

1) Counseling

--The murderer should go to **counseling** (A3)

-- that person needs some kind of **professional help** from a trained medical doctor.(A14)

2) Biblical teaching

-- Life is the greatest gift of all. In **the Bible** ...(A5)

-- he is going against **God** and ... (A5)

-- **God** does not accept murdering innocent people...(A5)

-- life is the most precious gift **God** has given you. (A 13)

-- **God** himself stated "an eye for an eye , a tooth for a tooth." (A13)

3) Taxpayer's standpoint

-- they should live comfortably on **tax payers** money ....(A6)

-- The **taxpayers** are the people paying the prices. (A8)

-- Why should we the **tax payers** pay for these murderers to live in jail (A12)

-- save **taxpayers** money (A17)

Reflecting Japanese culture:

1) Family and friends.

<Japanese subjects>

-- If I were parens of person who was killed by that man, I can't stand whatever he has reason. (J5)

-- the sorrow of suffer's **family** increase.(L11)

-- A person who is against the capital punishment should think of **the family** who have a person who was murdered. (J23)

<American subjects>

-- Once a child or person's life has been taken, **the family** and loved ones are murdered as well. In this sense, the bond between the family and its members die along with this crime. (A13)

-- Of course both the victim's and the guilty's **families** are very hurt and upset. (A14)

2)Empathy

<Japanese subjects>

-- **If I were parents of person who was killed by that man, I can't stand whatever he has reason.**(J5)

-- if **one of your family** is killed, can you permit the one who killed one of your family? As for **me, I never permit him.** (J13)

-- If **one of my lovely people was killed, I would be angry.** So I think the parents whose children was killed is very sad. (J16)

3) Concrete incidents

<Japanese subjects>

-- In Japan now some big problem happened. These are about poison **"Sarin."** The trouble happened in Subway & Matsumoto, Nagano. Three or four years ago, **a man killed many little girls** but he was not regular person. (J8)

-- These days I hear the terrible news. For example, **the gas accident in the subway in Tokyo, blowing up by the terrorism in the U.S.A.** and so on. (J15)

<American subjects>

--For example, what **Jeffery Dahmer** die was horrible. (A19)